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COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Development of Polish Livestock Breeding

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1. "Statistics showing the state of livestock breeding in Poland during the post-World War II years prove that until 1949 Polish agriculture was fairly successful in this particular sector, with the exception of pig breeding, and not only achieved but even exceeded the targets of production laid down in the Three-Year Plan. After 1949, however, a serious setback was observed in this development, inasmuch as the increase in the heads of cattle and pigs proceeded at a much slower rate. This led to a revision of the provisions of the Six-Year Plan concerning livestock breeding, which was approved by the Second Congress of the Polish Communist Party.
2. "It is characteristic that the same year 1949 which brought a serious decline in the rate of development of Polish agriculture, appears also as a crucial year for the fluctuations of the state of Polish animal breeding. The conclusion seems to be pretty obvious, since it was that very year, 1949, which was marked by suddenly increased pressure on the peasants to form collective farms.
3. "In animal breeding, the periods of insecurity and fear of taking risks, which hamper the effort of the producer, bring effects far more lasting than in any other sphere of agriculture. A much longer time is needed to make up for the temporary neglect, and also there is a much greater need for expert handling in this phase of agriculture. Therefore, such upheavals as enforced collectivization are bound to prove more harmful to the state of livestock than to the state of cultivation.
4. "The situation in animal breeding was so serious that it was openly acknowledged by the government in 1951, when Minister Minc admitted that there existed 'slight vacillations' in the numbers of heads of cattle. In his analysis, he gave two reasons for such a state of affairs. The first was, that the production of cattle fodder was far behind the needs. The second was the existence in the countryside of

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'kulak elements' and of the 'capitalist speculators' in towns, owing to which - in his opinion - a large portion of cattle production found its way to the channels of illegal distribution.

5. "The following table shows the numerical state of Polish livestock during the post-World War II years: (The figures are taken from fragmentary official reports published in the press of Poland, and from the United Nations Year Book. The state is given for 30 June of each year. Figures for 1938 show the state as it was in the territories now belonging to Poland).

	Cattle	Pigs	Sheep	Horses
	(in thousands of heads)			
1938	9,924	9,684	1,940	3,148
1949:				
Targets of the Three-Year Plan	5,200	5,000	1,100	2,470
Real achievement	6,345	5,818	1,617	2,541
1950	6,837	4,350	2,068	2,677
1951	7,200	8,450	2,190	2,797
1952	7,400	8,700	2,480	
1953	7,155	9,730	3,330	2,720

6. "The actual state of animal breeding determines meat and dairy production of the country. Statistical data concerning this production in Poland are very scarce; however, the following table may give some idea about the state of affairs.

	1938	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Milk* (incl. milk for butter & cheese prod.) in millions of liters:						
	10,425	5,250	7,000	7,700		9,000
Butter (in tons)			70,000	100,000	112,000	116,000
Meat (in tons)	1,168,000	850,000				933,000

\*) Target for milk production: 12,274 million liters in 1955.

In meat production, the proportion of different sorts of livestock are as follows: pigs - about 70%, cattle - about 25%, sheep and calves - about 5%.

7. "The following comments may be added to the above table:

a.) The great increase in butter production resulted in the non-fulfilment of targets in other sectors of dairy production (pasteurized milk etc.) The reason behind it was the large-scale export of butter. Butter consumption inside the country was effectively regulated by means of high prices.

b.) Meat production calculated per head of population did not show any effective increase between the years 1949 and 1953. In 1949 this production was at least 34 kilograms per head, accepting the number of population 25 millions (this number was presumably smaller at that time). In 1953 the production was 35 kilograms per head of population, which would result in a weekly meat ration of less than 675 grams. This estimate however does not take into account the enormous exports of meat and meat products which may have amounted to about a half of the entire production. If these exports are considered, the ration of meat per head comes out to be very pitiable indeed. These statistics illustrate clearly the failure of the regime's livestock breeding.

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8. "The reasons which Minister Minc gave as a basis for what he euphemistically called 'slight vacillations', are only partly true. There was - and is - a certain amount of secret slaughtering and speculation in meat, but it is proportionately too small to influence seriously the general position. As to the insufficient production of fodder, Minc is right, insofar as the utilization of pasture lands in Poland is still inadequate, and there is a need for more meliorations. However, this insufficient production of fodder is also largely due to the same reasons which caused the general decline of Polish agriculture, i.e., to the scare of collectivization.
9. "Apart from the pastures, the 'fodder-base' is provided by the basic agricultural products: rye, oats, barley and potatoes. With the state of livestock as it was in 1949, the fodder needs amounted to 11,500,000 tons of potatoes and more than two million of rye, barley and oats. With the gradual increase in heads of livestock, these needs also grew by about two million tons of potatoes and 500,000 tons of corn every year. However, at that time [1949] came the general lowering of agricultural production and the stabilization of potato and grain crops at a lower level, due mainly to the collectivization campaign.
10. "Another important reason for the failure - which Minc did not mention - is the very inept and faulty handling of this phase of agriculture by governmental planners and bureaucrats. Their mistake was that they did not pay enough attention to the proper building up of reproduction stock. This is revealed by the decree of the Council of Ministers of 17 Dec 53, which states the urgent need for regular breeding of animals for reproduction. In this sector - it is implied - planning has been inadequate, and it has been left to the mercy of 'spontaneous processes'. In other words, governmental planners have bungled the job.
11. "There is, however, yet another striking feature in the situation, which adds to the general conclusion that the failure in livestock breeding should be attributed mainly to the regime. While the proportion of collectivized agriculture within all Polish agriculture has been steadily growing during the last few years, the participation of 'socialist agriculture' in livestock breeding is still very modest. The main bulk of livestock production comes from individual farmers. This is illustrated by the following table:

State of animal breeding (heads) on 30 Jun 53:

	Cattle	Pigs	Sheep
Number of heads in all Polish agriculture:	7,385,000	9,730,000	3,330,000
Number of heads in production cooperatives and state-owned farms (PGRs)	545,000	1,090,000	340,000

12. "In comparison with the areas under cultivation actually held by the 'socialist agriculture', the position is as follows:
- 'Socialist agriculture' holds 20% of all areas under cultivation.  
 Its contribution in the production of cattle is about 7%  
 " " " pigs " 11%  
 " " " sheep " 10%
13. "Efforts are now being made to improve the state of livestock breeding in 'socialist agriculture'. At present, however, it is still clear that the main burden of livestock production lies on the individual farmers, and that the policy of the government towards these farmers must needs have a detrimental effect on the general situation in livestock breeding in Poland.

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14. "The above mentioned decree of the Council of Ministers, of 17 Dec 53, and later the Second Congress of the Communist Party, taking under consideration the unsatisfactory results obtained in the fulfillment of plans for livestock breeding, carried out a revision of previously accepted targets of the six-year Plan in this sector of agriculture.
15. "These revised targets, in comparison with the previous ones, are as follows:

	In thousands of heads:			
	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Cows only</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Sheep</u>
Target for 1955 under the original plan:	9,500	6,400	10,500	3,800
Target for 1955 under the revised plan:	7,900-8,100	5,500	10,000-11,100	4,200-4,300

16. "The table shows that the target for cattle has been reduced, while targets for pigs and sheep increased. Sheep breeding is the most satisfactory phase of all livestock breeding and there is some chance that here the aims of the government will be achieved. As to the target for pig breeding, it seems to be exaggerated, especially since as it is shown by the first table of this report - pig breeding met with serious setbacks in the post-World War II years - until now has not regained all lost ground. To achieve this ambitious target, it would be necessary to raise the numbers of heads of pigs by about one million in the course of 1954-55 (about 400,000 heads per year are needed for the renovation of the stock).
17. "Whatever the results may be, the concentration of greatest efforts on sheep and pig breeding is very characteristic. It would show that the policy of the government in the domain of livestock raising is motivated not so much by the intention to obtain better supplies for the internal food market, as by economic reasons of other nature. It may be assumed that the increase of targets for pig breeding has been undertaken with exports in mind. Greater quantities of pork meat, sausages and bacon may enable Poland to intensify her trade exchange in the West. Sheep breeding, on the other hand, will make Poland less dependent on imports from the West of wool for her textile industry. In 1953, 84% of the needs of this industry were supplied from imports of foreign wool, and only 16% from the country's own production. If the new target for sheep breeding is achieved, this ratio will be modified to 80% and 20% of Poland's own production at least maintained if a simultaneous increase in the production of woolen textiles comes into effect."

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